REMARKS

Claims 6 and 11-13 have been cancelled. Thus, Claims 5, 7 and 14-22 are currently pending in the present application, of which Claims 5 and 7 have been amended.

Support for claim amendments and newly added claims can be found on page 16, line 1 to page 18, line 18 and Figure 6.

Since Claims 6 and 12-13 have been cancelled, the claim objections on those claims are deemed moot.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Dobbek et al.* (US 6,034,831). Applicants respectfully traverse such rejection insofar as it might apply to the claims as amended herein.

Amended Claim 5 (and similarly Claim 14) now recites a step of "determining whether or not a write operation on said storage medium according to said write command is performed within a predetermined amount of time after loading said read/write head on said storage medium" and a step of "in response to a determination that said write operation is performed within a predetermined amount of time after loading said head on said storage medium, setting a verification flag to indicate a data verification is required immediately after said write operation." The claimed determining and setting steps are not taught or suggested by *Dobbek.* Because the claimed invention includes novel features that are not taught or suggested by *Dobbek,* the § 102 rejection is believed to be overcome.

Claims 6 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Baba et al.* (US 6,671,110). Since Claims 6 and 12 have been cancelled; thus, the § 102 rejection on Claims 6 and 12 is moot.

Claims 7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Kakihara et al.* (US 6,118,608). Applicants respectfully traverse such rejection insofar as it might apply to the claims as amended herein.

Amended Claim 7 (and similarly Claim 20) now recites a step of "determining whether or not a write operation on said storage medium according to said write command is performed within a predetermined amount of time after loading said read/write head on said storage medium" and a step of "in response to a determination that said write operation is performed within a predetermined amount of time after loading said head on said storage medium, setting a verification flag to indicate a data verification is required immediately after said write operation." The claimed determining and setting steps are not taught or suggested by *Kakihara*. Because the claimed invention includes novel features that are not taught or suggested by *Kakihara*, the § 102 rejection is believed to be overcome.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, Applicants believe that independent Claims 5, 7, 15 and 20 along with their respective dependent claims are in condition for allowance. The remaining prior art cited by the Examiner but not relied upon has been reviewed and is not believed to show or suggest the claimed invention.

No fee or extension of time is believed to be necessary; however, in the event that any addition fee or extension of time is required for the prosecution of the present application, please charge it against Hitachi Corporation Deposit Account No. 50-2587.

Respectfully submitted,

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